

A TRIBUTE TO GAIL SHAIVITZ

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 2, 2002

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to Gail Shaivitz and her 22-year career in service to Baltimore County seniors. During her career at the Pikesville Senior Center, Gail was dedicated to the well-being of her members, whom she treated as extended family.

Gail is unique because she has spent 20 years with one senior center, the Pikesville Senior Center. She began her career in 1980 as a part-time regional program specialist. In October 1982, she was assigned to the Pikesville Senior Center as the center supervisor. In 1984, Gail was promoted to director. In fact, Gail has the distinction of working at one senior center, in the same position, for the longest period of time of anyone in the Baltimore County Department of Aging.

As director of the Pikesville Senior Center, she was instrumental in getting it accredited by the National Council on the Aging's National Institute of Senior Centers. It was largely through Gail's efforts that the Pikesville Senior Center became one of the first centers in the county to receive accreditation status. Since then, all 18 Baltimore County senior centers have been accredited.

Gail's 20-year career at the Pikesville Senior Center has been marked by significant expansion and creativity in programing. She has worked to connect the senior center to the greater Pikesville community through membership in the Pikesville Community Growth Corporation and the Pikesville Chamber of Commerce. In 1997, she received special recognition from Baltimore County Executive Dutch Ruppersberger and the Baltimore County Department of Aging Director Charles Fisher.

I hope my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives will join me in saluting Gail Shaivitz, a committed public servant who has done much to improve the lives of seniors in Baltimore County.

TRIBUTE TO PROFESSOR DEAN
BERGERON

HON. MARTIN T. MEEHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 2, 2002

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Professor Dean Bergeron upon his retirement for his lifetime commitment to educating and inspiring students at the University of Massachusetts Lowell.

Robert F. Kennedy often said that "It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope; and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance."

Professor Dean Bergeron, who is lovingly referred to by students as "Dean", learned the lessons of acceptance, tolerance and the joy

of life from his parents Joseph and Chloe. Their upbringing inspired Dean to enter the teaching profession, so he studied History at St. Michael's College. Upon the completion of his baccalaureate degree, his passion motivated him to further his education in history at both Villanova and Brown University. In 1965, Dean Bergeron concluded his studies and accepted a teaching position in the History Department at Lowell State College, a decision that resulted in a lifetime career that positively changed thousands of students' lives.

Dean Bergeron displayed diverse acts of courage on a daily basis by challenging students to recognize the depths of their potential. He implemented cutting edge classroom techniques to keep students engaged. He created the Model Leagues, an involvement learning program for students to participate in simulated United Nations and Arab League conferences. He and Professor Joyce Denning used their own money to start a grant program for students. He even implemented new classes into the curriculum, such as, Middle East Studies, the Environment and the Kennedys.

His impact upon the lives of students has truly been remarkable. The Model Leagues program is one of the best in the nation, winning local, national and international awards. It has provided students with the opportunity to learn and to travel. The grant opportunities has provided students an opportunity to create meaningful projects at home and abroad. There are few words to express the way students feel about him. Many refer to him as a mentor, advisor and best friend.

Dean Bergeron used the classroom to encourage students to stand up for an ideal, to help those less fortunate and to dispel myths about other cultures. Dean was truly an outstanding professor who cared about his students. His legacy has created countless ripples of hopes that impacted the hearts and minds of his students and has left the University of Massachusetts Lowell, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the United States of America and the World community a far better place.

HOUSES OF WORSHIP POLITICAL
SPEECH PROTECTION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. DAVID VITTER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 1, 2002

Mr. VITTER. Mr. Speaker, I offer my strong support H.R. 2357, the Houses of Worship Political Speech Protection Act. This bill, a much-needed change in current law, would once again offer First Amendment freedoms to our nation's churches without the fear of a heavy-handed or politicized IRS or federal government.

Since 1954, our nation's religious institutions have been silenced. Prior to that time, religious leaders spoke freely about issues. Civil rights had a great moral and religious component to it. Abolition had a great moral and religious component to it. And so issues today continue to have their moral and religious components. Yet churches are told, many times under an inconsistent system that is only selectively enforced, to silence themselves or face losing tax-exempt status. This

is the greatest disservice to some of our greatest institutions.

Sadly, there has even been an attempt to intimidate churches from speaking out on issues. One liberal organization devoted to their own version of the First Amendment actually mailed over a quarter million letters in 2000 to houses of worship warning them about speaking out on political issues. The chilling effect of this clear attempt to muzzle our nation's pastors, priests, ministers, rabbis and other clergy, must not stand.

This legislation has been well thought out and thoroughly reviewed by committees so that new campaign loopholes are not created, and no new avenues of soft money are allowed—both things I would oppose. We are merely asking to go back to the laws that existed for the first one hundred fifty years of our nation, which simply allowed freedom of expression for religious organizations.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support and vote for H.R. 2357.

COLLECTIONS FROM OTHER
FEDERAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 2, 2002

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing H.R. 5530, a bill that would strengthen VA's rights under law to collect reimbursement from certain third parties to cover the costs the Department incurs in providing health care to veterans covered by another private or public health plan. A number of these plans either refuse to reimburse, or are prohibited from doing so by current law. My bill, H.R. 5530, would fix this problem by eliminating these barriers to reimbursement for VA care.

Those who pay attention to such matters are aware that the VA health care system is seriously under-funded to meet the demands being placed on it by our nation's veterans. As Chairman of the authorizing Committee for the Department of Veterans Affairs, I have worked hard to ensure that VA health care has the resources it requires to provide high quality health care services in a timely fashion. However, today VA health care is in crisis, as increasing enrollment and rising health care costs have resulted in hundreds of thousands of veterans being forced to wait months, even more than a year, to see a VA doctor. A VA report recently said that over 300,000 veterans are now waiting over six months to be seen in VA primary care. This is not acceptable.

America's veterans did not ask us to wait while they finished high school, apprenticeships or college before being trained and sent into the European Theater of World War II as replacements for troops killed or taken prisoner of war at the Battle of the Bulge. They did not ask the U.S. Government to delay our call-up of WWII veterans in 1950 to go into the frozen confines of Korea to fight Chinese Communists along the 38th Parallel, or whether they could somehow postpone the horrible suffering caused by extreme cold weather at the Chosin Reservoir.

They were called, they answered, and they served. This is the way of America's citizen soldiers. Now, many of these veterans are